

VISIT SCENE TRAGEDY TO KNOW WHAT HAPPENED EXACTLY, TAN URGED

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KIMANIS: Minister of Infrastructure Development Datuk Raymond Tan has been told to go to the ground to find out the reasons for the collapse of the embankments of the structure spanning the Sungai Madahan.

The call came from Kimanis MP Datuk Anifah Aman (pictured) who said that relying on reports and then making comments was not the proper way to solve issues following Friday's tragedy where three people were killed.

"This was an avoidable incident and instead of making unwarranted statements, Tan should go to the scene and get



an first hand briefing on the matter before finding out what steps can be taken to avoid a recurrence," said Anifah.

Anifah also said that the structure was not a bridge per se but a multi-cell box culvert that acted as a bridge over the river, and that its inlets were heavily blocked by debris at the time of the incident.

"As the entrance to the culvert was completely choked by tree trunks and bamboo, the blockage resulted in the erosion of both sides of the approaches of the culvert," said Anifah.

He said that the authorities concerned should make sure that the flow of water though all multi-cell box culverts are not impeded at all times.

Yesterday, Tan was

quoted in a local paper as saying that the Public Works Department should not be solely blamed for the tragedy and that maintenance of the road surface was good.

But Anifah rightly pointed out that maintenance works must also include clearing debris that might otherwise choke the entrances and in this case, the authorities were notified of the blockage.

"The surface of the structure as claimed by the minister is referred to as the road surface and not the drainage structure and that is in good condition," he added.

"Tan should not be

making needless comments until he is fully aware of the situation and if the Chief Minister can visit the scene of the tragedy, there is no reason why Tan should not visit the place.

"He has all the more reason to do so as a minister in charge of infrastructure and works, and his duties should be to make immediate enquiries as to why such failure occurred leading to the loss of lives".

Anifah added that Tan should not be insensitive to the fact that there was loss of life due to the fact that someone had failed to carry out proper maintenance that led to the

blockage of the culverts.

Anifah urged Tan to make sure checks are carried out at all bridges or culverts spanning rivers especially now due to the bad weather to ensure that such a tragedy does not recur elsewhere.

Friday's tragedy saw a father and son drown after the car they were travelling in plunged into the swift flowing waters after the embankments caved in.

A third person, a UMS under graduate also drowned after he slipped and fell while trying to cross the river with his motorcycle by using the railway bridge nearby.